

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1-28 (canceled).

Claim 29 (currently amended): A method of providing a pet with ~~a benefit~~ at least one benefit selected from the group consisting of gut function, outward appearance, physical and mental activity and aging, the benefit relating to an effective assimilation of a lipid or lipid fraction comprising the steps of administering to the pet an edible composition comprising a pancreatic function promoter and a promoter selected from the group consisting of a liver function promoter and an intestinal mucosa function-promoter.

Claim 30 (previously presented): A method according to claim 29 wherein the pancreatic function-promoter comprises a component selected from the group consisting of a lipase, a gut pH modifier and a pancreatic extract.

Claim 31 (previously presented): A method according to claim 29 wherein the liver function-promoter is selected from the group consisting of taurine, emulsifiers, vitamins, minerals, glutathione and glutathione promoters, and combinations thereof.

Claim 32 (previously presented): A method according to claim 29 wherein the intestinal mucosa function promoter includes a component selected from the group consisting of a fat transportation aid, agent or carrier.

Claim 33 (canceled).

Claim 34 (currently amended): A method according to claim ~~33~~ 29 wherein the benefit is related to aging, and is observable in any one or more benefits selected from the group consisting of delayed onset of signs of aging; amelioration of an age-related effect; improved vision; restored functionality of the digestive system in an aged pet; and increased longevity.

Claim 35 (previously presented): A method according to claim 29 wherein the composition is in the form of a nutritionally balanced, ready-to-eat meal.

Claim 36 (previously presented): A method according to claim 35 wherein the composition comprises a dried kibble.

Claim 37 (previously presented): A method according to claim 29 wherein the composition is administered as a meal supplement.

Claim 38 (currently amended): A method according to claim ~~33~~ 29 wherein the benefit is related to an attribute selected from the group consisting of outward appearance and is observable in any one or more of: improved body condition; improved muscle tone; and improved skin and coat condition; ~~and a younger look.~~

Claim 39 (currently amended): A nutrition management regimen comprising a dietary component for feeding regularly in an effective lipid assimilation-promoting amount; ~~according to predetermined directions,~~ to a pet animal, the dietary component comprising a pancreatic function promoter and at least one or more of a promoter selected from the group consisting of liver function promoter and an intestinal mucosa function-promoter.

Claim 40 (previously presented): A regimen according to claim 39 wherein the pancreatic function-promoter comprises a component selected from the group consisting of a lipase, a gut pH modifier and a pancreatic extract.

Claim 41 (previously presented): A regimen according to claim 40 wherein the gut pH modifier is selected from the group consisting of an acidifier, an alkalanizer, a buffer, a prebiotic and a probiotic micro-organism.

Claim 42 (previously presented): A regimen according to claim 39 wherein the liver function-promoter is selected from the group consisting of taurine, emulsifiers, vitamins, minerals, glutathione and glutathione promoters, and combinations thereof.

Claim 43 (previously presented): A regimen according to claim 39 wherein the liver function-promoter is a nutrient that increases endogenous glutathione after ingestion.

Claim 44 (previously presented): A regimen according to claim 39 wherein the intestinal. mucosa function-promoter includes a component selected from the group consisting of a fat transportation aid, agent and carrier.

Claim 45 (previously presented): A regimen according to claim 44 wherein the component is selected from whey protein and proteases having the capacity to promote the formation of lipoproteins.

Claim 46 (previously presented): A regimen according to claim 44 wherein the intestinal mucosa function-promoter includes at least one of an anti-inflammatory agent, lactoferrin, a prebiotic or a probiotic micro-organism.

Claim 47 (previously presented): A regimen according to claim 46 wherein the anti-inflammatory agent is an omega-3 fatty acid.

Claim 48 (previously presented): A regimen according to claim 44 wherein the component has a fatty acid profile selected to improve lipid absorption.

Claim 49 (previously presented): A regimen according to claim 48 wherein the fatty acid profile is polyunsaturated.

Claim 50 (previously presented): A regimen according to claim 49 wherein the component comprises whey protein.

Claim 51 (previously presented): A regimen according to claim 39 wherein the benefit derivable by the pet from effective assimilation of a lipid or lipid fraction is related to at least one attribute selected from the group consisting of gut function, outward appearance, pet-to-owner relationship, ageing and general health aspects.

Claim 52 (previously presented): A regimen according to claim 51 wherein the benefit that is related to gut function is observable in any one or more of the attributes selected from the group consisting of increased nutrient and energy digestibility; improved gut microflora such as is observed in decreased small intestine bacterial overgrowth; improved fecal consistency and/or odor; optimized fecal volume; improved regularity of food transit time; reduced flatulence; enhanced gut detoxification; and improved absorption of fat soluble nutrients.

Claim 53 (currently amended): A regimen according to claim 51 wherein the benefit that is related to outward appearance is observable in any one or more of the attributes selected from the group consisting of improved body condition; improved muscle tone; and improved skin and coat condition; ~~and a younger look~~.

Claim 54 (currently amended): An edible composition in a pet animal comprising a pancreatic function-promoter and at least one promoter selected from the group consisting of a liver function-promoter and an intestinal mucosa function-promoter in an amount sufficient to effect lipid ~~digestibility~~ assimilation in the pet.

Claim 55 (currently amended): A method of improving the appearance of a pet animal comprising the step of increasing the pet's capability to ~~digest~~ assimilate fat in its diet by feeding the pet a diet that contains a pancreatic function promoter and a promoter selected from the group consisting of a liver function promoter, an intestinal mucosa function promoter or a combination thereof.

Claim 56 (previously presented): A method according to claim 55 wherein the pancreatic function promoter comprises a fat emulsifier/emulsification system, the intestinal mucosa function promoter comprises an acidifying agent and intestinal mucosa function promoter comprises a fat transportation agent.